

## Sharing Best Practices: Doing Research Together

Seminar

May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018 / 12:30 - 19:30 PM

German Embassy Jakarta

Jl. M. H. Thamrin No. 1, Jakarta

### – Working Group Findings and Recommendations –

#### Group A: Tackling global challenges

**Chair: Prof. Dr. Iskandar Siregar** (Faculty of Forestry, Bogor Agricultural University)

Global challenges such as climate-change or the loss of biodiversity are so complex that they demand joint efforts. Collaborative research projects of an international scale offer unique opportunities, but also bring together different expectations, interests, scientific/academic cultures, funding structures and regulatory contexts.

#### Findings

Q1: How can international research partnerships between Indonesia and Germany/other countries contribute to addressing global challenges?

- International research collaborations between Indonesia and Germany bring together partners with distinct and complementary strengths.
- They help understand existing societal problems and derive appropriate recommendations for action.
- Researchers can access resources beyond their own: e.g. funding, extensive networks of expertise and data.
- International research teams bring together different cultural perspectives and methodological approaches, and thus widen the perspective of analysis and interpretation.
- In intercultural research partnerships, all partners expand their capacities and experience and can make a significant contribution to planning and decision-making.
- Activities might include joint research, staff and student exchanges, training, networking, conferences, publishing, and policy advocacy.

Q2: What are the distinct strengths of Indonesian and German research partners?

- Research type: basic, applied
- Resources: technological know-how, natural resources and biodiversity
- Human resources: international, domestic
- Market: established resp. emerging commercial markets for high-technology products

Q3: What priority is attached to basic research and applied research in Indonesia and other countries? What are the effects of possible differences in their importance?

- Research priorities should be: health and medicine, food, agriculture, marine, security and defense sciences, social humanities, transportation, technical engineering product, information and communication, disaster management

Q4: To what degree should national and local governmental authorities be involved in the various phases of a research project?

- National governmental authorities need to engage in intergovernmental collaboration.
- Joint programming: countries define common vision, a management structure and a research agenda.

Q5: How to integrate international research projects into national priorities? How to develop a research project which is not related to national priorities?

Interfacing research findings to policy makers and practitioners; using international research projects as benchmarking for national research proposal development

### Recommendations

- Engage policy makers.
- Consult with practitioners (UN agencies, NGOs, private sector).
- Consider stakeholder-specific opportunities and risks at all levels of decision-making.
- Involve researchers with a multidisciplinary and broad skillset.
- Research should focus on the needs of people and actively involve them on the path towards sustainable development.

## Group B: Managing international research projects

**Chair: Dr. Suria Tarigan** (Faculty of Agriculture, Bogor Agricultural University)

Over the last decade, research management has become far more professionalized and specialized, with greater emphasis being put on strategic research planning and accountability. While common goals should guide collaborative research projects, the stakeholders' interests vary across researchers, donors, regulatory bodies, and consumers.

### Findings

- Research culture and research ethics of partners need to be harmonised for better international research collaboration
- Focus of international partnerships needs to match the sponsors' guidelines/regulations
- Research has to be seen as an investment
- Negative impacts of some international partnerships should not be generalised – need to develop more adequate administrative tools to prevent misunderstandings/negative impacts
- Research regulation needs to improve in some aspects (e.g. financing system, export / import of equipment, permits and personnel capacity)
- There is a need of industry to fund research

## Recommendations

- More trainings on research management (proposal development, project management, ethics) in international partnership atmosphere
- Improvement of research governance
- Government should support Indonesian researchers who are involved in international research partnerships
- Funding regulations for research should be reformed
- University/research centres should have authority to manage their partnerships more independently (permits etc.)

## Group C: Building mutually beneficial research partnerships

**Chair: Dr. Arinafril** (Faculty of Agriculture, Sriwijaya University Palembang)

One of the main problems encountered in the implementation of collaborative research projects is the asymmetry of partners and even dominance of one partner.

Q1: What parties (such as researchers, donors, regulatory bodies) are involved in current international research partnerships in Indonesia?

- Universities (ressources, qualified staff)
- Immigration bureaus (transferring materials)
- Quarantine (conservation)
- Ministry of Environment and Forestry
- Local communities (valuable knowledge about culture, which is important to overcome inequalities)
- Research institutes
- Government institutions
- Private companies
- NGO/LSM

Q2: What factors can lead to inequality / “asymmetry” between various partners?

- Unbalanced partnership due to different financial input
- Different methods and experience
- Good resp. limited access to technology
- Mindset (low confidence) / mentality
- Stereotypes
- Work ethics

Q3: How can contributions among partners be balanced and co-ownership be increased?

- Written agreements, which determine rights and obligations of partners
- Clear agreements on publication policy and data management
- Counter budget (funding from both sides)
- Sharing of ressources

Q4: How to enhance diversity and synergy in the composition of research teams?

- Similar level of prior knowledge, same general understanding of problems and conditions in the field of research
- Interdisciplinary composition of the team
- Emotional linkage of team members due to previous contact and cooperation

Q5: How can trust between partners be built?

- Openness and honesty in terms of research resources and equality in publishing
- Willingness to keep to written agreements

Q6: Do we need guidelines on good practices in international partnerships? What principles should good practice be based on?

- Technical guidelines in form of regulatory documents and terms of reference needed
- Non-technical guidelines on research ethics, acceptable behaviour and intercultural competence
- Share new-found knowledge with young researchers